What is claimed is:

1. A surface acoustic wave device comprising:

a $LiTaO_3$ substrate; and

an interdigital transducer provided on the $LiTaO_3$ substrate, said interdigital transducer containing as a major component at least one of Au, Ag, Ta, Mo, Cu, Ni, Cr, Zn, and W; wherein

said interdigital transducer has a normalized film thickness H/λ of at least approximately 0.05 so as to excite a shear horizontal wave.

2. A surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1, wherein said interdigital transducer includes Au as a major component, said substrate has Euler angles of approximately (0°, 125° - 146°, 0°± 5°), and said normalized film thickness H/λ is within the range of approximately 0.001 to 0.05.

3. A surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1, wherein said interdigital transducer includes Ag as a major component, said substrate has Euler angles of approximately (0°, 125° - 140°, 0°± 5°), and said normalized film thickness H/λ is within the range of approximately 0.002 to 0.05.

4. A surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1, wherein said interdigital transducer includes Ta as a major component, said substrate has Euler angles of approximately (0°, 125° - 140°, 0°± 5°), and said normalized film thickness H/λ is within the range of approximately 0.002 to 0.05.

5. A surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1, wherein said interdigital transducer includes Mo as a major component, said substrate has Euler angles of approximately (0°, 125° - 134°, 0°± 5°), and said normalized film thickness H/λ is within the range of approximately 0.005 to 0.05.

6. A surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1, wherein said interdigital transducer includes Cu as a major component, said substrate has Euler angles of approximately (0°, 125° - 137°, 0°± 5°), and said normalized film thickness H/λ is within the range of approximately 0.003 to 0.05.

7. A surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1, wherein said interdigital transducer includes Ni as a major component, said substrate has Euler angles of approximately (0°, 125° - 133°, 0°± 5°), and said normalized film thickness H/λ is within the range of approximately 0.006 to 0.05.

8. A surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1, wherein said interdigital transducer includes Cr as a major component, said substrate has Euler angles of approximately (0°, 125° - 147°, 0°± 5°), and said normalized film thickness H/λ is within the range of approximately 0.003 to 0.05.

9. A surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1, wherein said interdigital transducer includes Zn as a major component, said substrate has Euler angles of approximately (0°, 125° - 138°, 0°± 5°), and said normalized film thickness H/λ is within the range of approximately 0.003 to 0.05.

10. A surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1, wherein said interdigital transducer includes W as a major component, said substrate has Euler angles of approximately (0°, 125° - 138°, 0°± 5°), and said normalized film thickness H/λ is within the range of approximately 0.002 to 0.05.

11. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 1.

12. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 2.

13. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 3.

14. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 4.

15. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 5.

16. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 6.

17. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 7.

18. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 8.

19. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 9.

20. A communication device including the surface acoustic wave device according to claim 10.